

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated June 28, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-3 and 11-13 have been canceled. Claims 7 and 17 have been amended. Claims 4-7, 9, 14-17 and 19 remain pending in this application. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 4-6 and 14-16 and the indication that claims 7, 9, 17, and 19 are allowable.

Claims 1-3 and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT Publication No. WO 99/05567 to Johnson (hereinafter "Johnson") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,844,533 to Usui et al. (hereinafter "Usui").

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 11-13 is now moot as claims 1-3 and 11-13 are canceled without prejudice.

Claims 7 and 17 have been amended to be in independent format, so the objection to claims 7, 9, 17, and 19 is now moot and these claims are allowable.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

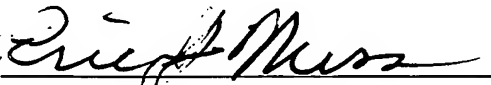
If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

The undersigned hereby signs this filing under the authority provided by 37 C.F.R. § 1.34 pending the filing of a Power of Attorney and Statement under 3.37(b) executed by Assignee.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: September 28, 2005

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